UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/352,949	07/14/1999	KAZUYUKI MURATA	50023-107	2823

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ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2624	16

DATE MAILED: 08/11/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

PTO-90C (Rev. 07-01)

-- *The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address* --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on <u>27 May 2003</u>.

2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL.**   2b) ☐ This action is non-final.

3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) ☒ Claim(s) <u>1,3-6 and 12</u> is/are pending in the application.

   4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) ☒ Claim(s) <u>1,3-6 and 12</u> is/are rejected.

7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.

   Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.

   If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

   a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:

   1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

   2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .

   3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

   * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

   a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) ☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ .

4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .

5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) ☐ Other: .

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1.   The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in
> section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are
> such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person
> having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the
> manner in which the invention was made.

2.   Claims 1, 3-6 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the

combination of Hosotsubo (US Patent No. 6,009,485) and Tabata (US Patent No. 6,198,542 B1).

As to claim 1, Hosotsubo teaches: an image data distribution system wherein the image

data will be sent out to the respective members of the destination group specified by the

destination information (col. 1, lines 41-44) via a network (21 in fig. 2, col. 6, lines 21-26), the

system comprising:

Input manipulation means (24 in fig. 10), provided in each digital multifunction apparatus

(i.e., host computer 22 in fig. 2), which can request the controller (i.e., the CPU 34 in fig. 2) to

send back all the destination groups, and specify a specific group from among all the destination

groups sent back from the controller and the memory (col. 5, lines 5-13), and send to the

controller and the memory (col. 5, lines 5-13) at least the specified group together with a group

registration request to register the digital multifunction apparatus with the specified group after

specifying the group (it is noted that a user inputs for registering from S11 to S15 in fig. 4, col. 5,

lines 40-42 and 66 to col. 6, line 2; and the specified group or groups stored in 25 in fig. 2 and

S16 in fig. 4, col. 6, line 55 to col. 7, line 12),

(It is noted that, col. 5, lines 25-31, ID and user name is registered with each of printers 1

connected to the host computer on the predetermined network 21. Thus, the user would be

considered as the computer registered with each of printers. And, the predetermined network 21

is determined for connected with all the destination groups including group of

section/department or floor names "col. 5, lines 58-65". The registered computer would be

registered with a group of printers or a group of the host computers in highlight installed on the

designated floor "col. 6, lines 63-65" and figure 9 shows the computers (or the user names) are

specified on the group of floor 5F. Therefore, the e-mail or voice mail can be distributed from

one registered host computer to the specified group of computers in the network "col. 6, lines 51-

54" and the print information can be distributed from the registered computer to the specified

group of printers "col. 7, lines 5-11"),

the controller (i.e., the CPU 34) sends to the user all the destination groups according to

the request sent from the user and registers the digital multifunction apparatus (i.e., the computer

in which the user inputs the command for registering) with the specified destination group (it is

noted that a group registration means such as RAM 31 for registering specific users as a specific

group; and the controller (i.e., the CPU 34) for controlling to provide and register the destination

id to the specified group from all the destination groups based on the user command "col. 5, lines

24-31").

Although Hosotsubo does not explicitly teach the controller 34 would be a server, which

communicates with a requested apparatus for providing information from the request user and

registering the information from the requested user, the server would be considered as a

controller 34 because the server can have the same functions as the controller 34. The server

would be well known in the prior art to be a controller for distributing the connected destination

apparatuses to the request user. Furthermore, Tabata teaches a server provides an information

group list to the host computer after requesting of the user (Fig. 5, col. 6, lines 31-44 and col. 7,

lines 46-50).

It would have been obvious to modify the communication system of Hosotsubo for

providing an information group list from a server to the host computer after requesting of the

user as taught by Tabata. The suggestion for modifying the system of Hosotsubo can be reasoned

by one of ordinary skill in the art as set forth by Tabata because the modified system of

Hosotsubo would increase the efficiency by having a server to store and provide any information

of the output devices to a host and allows a user easily to keep track information in a group of the

output devices and select a designed output devices in the group. Such resultant systems allow

the computer to perform any other functions in high speed because the computer does not have to

store and process the register with other apparatuses.

As to claim 3, Tabata teaches that the digital multifunction apparatus is provided with

image input means for reading a document and sends image data from the image input means to

the image server (17 in fig. 3).

As to claim 4, Tabata teaches that the digital multifunction apparatus is provided with

storage means for storing image data and sends image data from the storage means to the image

server (16 in fig. 3).

As to claim 5, Tabata teaches that the digital multifunction apparatus is provided with

facsimile transmit-receive means and sends image data from the facsimile transmit-receive

means to the image server (17 in fig. 3).

As to claim 6, Tabata teaches that the digital multifunction apparatus is provided with image output means and prints image data from the image server by the image output means (14 in fig. 3).

As to claim 12, the combination of Tabata and Hosotsubo teaches that the method is performed by the apparatus claim 1 as indicated above.

Response to Arguments and Amendment

Applicant's arguments filed 5/27/03 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant asserted in page 6   "Hosotsubo relates to apparatus and method of forming a new group while the present invention relates to apparatus and method of assigning a new terminal to one of plural groups registered in the server by using the new terminal. Assigning a new terminal to one of plural groups registered in the server by using the new terminal clearly distinguishes the claimed invention from anything disclosed in the applied prior art references". In reply, Hosotsubo clearly teaches the registering for the new information of the host computer to the specified destination group. Col. 5, lines 25-31, ID and user name is registered with each of printers 1 connected to the host computer on the predetermined network 21. Thus, the user would be considered as the computer registered with each of printers. And, the predetermined network 21 is determined for connected with all the destination groups including group of section/department or floor names "col. 5, lines 58-65". The registered computer would be registered with a group of printers or a group of the host computers in highlight installed on the designated floor "col. 6, lines 63-65" and figure 9 shows the computers (or the user names) are

specified on the group of floor 5F. Therefore, the e-mail or voice mail can be distributed from one registered host computer to the specified group of computers in the network "col. 6, lines 51-54" and the print information can be distributed from the registered computer to the specified group of printers "col. 7, lines 5-11".

col. 5, lines 57-65: the user's post "i.e., the specified group" such as assistant section manager, section manager, department manager, office manager, or head office manager to which a user belongs may be registered.

Therefore, the host computer (or the user), which be considered as the multifunction destination, is registered with the specified group of the computers for receiving the email (col. 6, lines 51-54).

a group registration means such as RAM 31 for registering specific users as a specific group; and the controller (i.e., the CPU 34) for controlling to provide and register the destination id to the specified group from all the destination groups based on the user command (col. 5, lines 24-31).

A server includes a controller, and the server controller can have the same function as the controller 34 at the computer for providing all the destination groups and registering the information of from the requested user.

Furthermore, Tabata teaches a server provides an information group list to the host computer after requesting of the user (Fig. 5, col. 6, lines 31-44 and col. 7, lines 46-50).

For the above reasons, it is believed that the cited prior art fully discloses the claimed invention and the rejection stand.
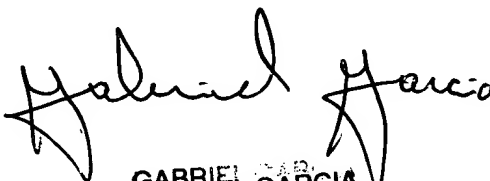
Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time

policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE

MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO

MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after

the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period

will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37

CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event,

however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing

date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the
examiner should be directed to Douglas Q. Tran whose telephone number is (703) 305-4857 or
E-mail address is Douglas.tran@uspto.gov.
Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding
should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-4700.

Douglas Q. Tran
Jul. 29, 2003

GABRIEL GARCIA
PRIMARY EXAMINER